

have taken. They may repudiate everything like identity with States' rights ideas, or with the doctrine of State sovereignty, as it has been avowed and announced by its fathers and projectors. But the discussion of this question here has relumed that subject before us, and has presented that entire question of States' rights sovereignty before us as a body. And in engaging in this discussion we cannot be charged, any one of us, with trenching upon the opinions expressed by gentlemen of the minority upon this question. We have a right to deal with the question as the discussion presents it.

Here in the State of Maryland, in the hall of the House of Delegates, that dead body of States' rights and State sovereignty has been exhumed. It is dead, sir. Its friends killed it. But the favorable opportunity and the precious moment has arrived in the midst of the strength of the contest which is now being waged between us, and under the kind auspices of a beneficent Government, the friends of States' rights are paying their final respects to the resting place of that nondescript, and have brought it here on its funeral bier with all the ceremonies of the grave about it. They have gathered about that dead corpse. Various views have been expressed respecting it. Various attempts have been made to restore that lifeless body; but they have proved nugatory and ineffectual. Gentlemen have differed in their opinions respecting the organism of the body. Some have doubted whether it be dead. Some have said it was dead. Some have insisted that it lived. Nevertheless, sir, it is that same dead body; gone, gone, irretrievably gone, and all that they can do to it now is to give it respectable sepulture.

It is not without a considerable degree of embarrassment that I approach the discussion of this question. I know well that it is a theme of contest between the most eminent minds of this country. I know that it has been discussed for many years. I am inclined to the opinion—and I think I shall be sustained in that by the opinions of all, by the facts of history, and by the developments which are taking place all around us—that the subject has been entirely exhausted. Its seed cannot longer grow in American soil. I am also impressed with the fact, and the presence which surrounds me warns me that it is no trifling thing, and will be no trifling effort on my part, to enter the arena of this fight. I am admonished that there are around me men trained from childhood, who know well how to wield the weapons of logic, men around whose brow are gathered the symbols of age, and whose light is known to history. I am warned that one with the little experience I have in matters of this kind, has no small work to do, to encounter such men. When I contemplate this whole question of political science, and see its barred doors,

possessing no talismanic charm or magic word by the utterance of which the doors will open, and I may enter and permeate its secret by-ways and enter its arcana, and there get the information I need to sustain me on this question, I feel its deepening, dampening shadows resting upon me, and I shall not attempt to enter it. I shall be guided by the light of facts; guided by experience common to all men.

Allow me here to say that the public place afforded by the beneficence of the State, where all may go and obtain the lore that they desire for the maintenance of any views they may hold or any opinions they may entertain—the library of the State of Maryland—I find that it has been depleted of all works appertaining to the subject under consideration. I am inclined to make this reference for the reason that when the gallant knight from Prince George's county (Mr. Clarke) was able to maintain himself with shield and buckler, and bore around so fiercely with his lance, he said he was not prepared for the debate that had been suddenly sprung upon the minority of the House; and the same thing was echoed by pretty much every gentleman after him. I should judge from the condition of the library of the State of Maryland that they were pretty thoroughly prepared. If they are not, the Lord knows the majority are not, for none of them can get the books. I am at a loss to conjecture, and I submit now to the intelligent men who compose the minority of this House, that were it not for the word "paramount" in this article now before us, the minority would have no argument at all, because that has been the burden of their complaint in the whole argument. If the majority of this House could perambulate the lexicon, and by any possibility find out some word more potent, with more concentrated force in it than the word "paramount," I apprehend that the minority would contend for "paramount" as much as we contend for it now.

We seem to be towing them along step by step. They are slow in their progress. They are not inclined to take the lead, or to follow on the crest of the wave, as the progress of the age drives onward; but they are disposed to be led. They are coming on, coming on, step by step. The only difficulty is that the majority of this House lead them almost too fast. They are so lame and feeble that they stumble and fall as they follow.

I will do the gentlemen the justice to say, that so far as I understand it, some of them at least, have not insisted upon the States' rights theory entire. They have acknowledged and contended that it was the duty and the province of every American citizen to owe fealty and support to the Constitution of the United States. The first gentleman who spoke, (Mr. Clarke,) insists that they owe fidelity and support to the Constitution of the